

and i realize,
what do i care: i'll always have
my good looks to fall back on.

PAUL CÉZANNE: THE CARD PLAYERS

is this painting primarily concerned
with pipes or with noses?

four pipes hang on a wall.
one pipe has been set aside
on the card table.
a bored man in the background
is smoking a pipe.

all the noses are pointed,
even that of the kibitzing juvenile.

probably the french can place a nose
within a square mile of its birthplace.

i suspect these noses must have
enormous significance for the french.

but what if these pipes
are in point of fact
actually lug-wrenches?

could cézanne have invented the lug-wrench
before henry ford invented the wheel?

there remains the even greater conundrum:
would a bored man standing
against the wall, arms folded,
in the background of a card game,

pass the time

by smoking a lug-wrench?

clearly the quintessence of the theory/practice
of paul cézanne

consists of his precedent-shattering
defamiliarization
of noses and pipes/lug-wrenches.